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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal spirit, the fountain of all goodness, thank You that You have us in the place You want us to be right now. Teach our lawmakers to take seriously their role in solving the problems of our times, that they may fulfill Your plans for their lives. Continue to mold and inspire our Senators, and bless others through their labors. Use Your sovereign wisdom to bring about good results from their decisions and from consequences beyond their control.

Lord, give our leaders the courage to tell us what we need to hear, not what we want to hear. Make them willing to take political risks, to do the unpopular thing when it leads to justice and truth. Draw us together as one people who do Your will so that America may be a light to nations.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, September 5, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. CARDIN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this morning, the Senate will be in a period for morning business until 11:30 a.m., with Republicans controlling the first half of the time, the majority controlling the final portion. I ask that be a full 90 minutes because both Republicans and Democrats have indicated a desire to speak. So whatever time Senator MCCONNELL and I take we will not count against that time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, at approximately 11:30 a.m., the Senate will resume consideration of the Military Construction and Veterans appropriations measure. This, of course, is an extremely critical proposal for current members of the Armed Forces and those who have previously served, our veterans.

We got word yesterday from the co-manager of this bill, Senator KAY BALEY HUTCHISON, that the President said he would sign the bill in its present state, which is a good message. Therefore, I think we should proceed posthaste to complete this legislation as

quickly as we can today. We have business, as I already indicated, we have to finish this week. We will do our best to complete this legislation. I hope we don't have to file cloture on it. I hope we can complete the bill. There was no indication yesterday there would be a lot of amendments. I don't know if there will be any.

When we finish the bill, then we go to the Foreign Operations appropriations bill. That bill is \$700 million less than what the President requested. There certainly should be something we can work out in that regard.

Then we have to complete education reconciliation. There is a statutory 10 hours on that legislation.

We can complete all that business very quickly this week or, if necessary, we will work on Friday and Saturday, hopefully not on Sunday.

Monday morning, there will be votes. As I have indicated to the Republican leader, we will have no votes after about 5:30 or 6 p.m. on Monday. On Tuesday, we will have a full day. We might have to work into the night because we hope to be on Transportation appropriations. We will have our last vote about 12:30 or 1 p.m. on Wednesday in relation to the Jewish holiday. We may work past that time, but there will be no votes after midday.

I hope Members will cooperate. Today, we have our weekly recess for party conferences. We are going to come back at 2:15. In the history of the Senate, this is an important day. Someone who has stood for bipartisanship his entire career as a Member of the House of Representatives and as a Senator is coming back. TIM JOHNSON has been extremely ill. He was about as sick as a person can get. He is back. His brain is 100 percent. The right side of his body is not back. His speaking, as he said last week when he announced his coming back in South Dakota—he hoped all Senators would follow his example because his mind works faster than his mouth. The doctor said his speech will return totally.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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